Writing Emails or Letters to Members of Congress about the Children’s Health Insurance Program

Updated November 2017

Context: The Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) provides comprehensive coverage, including dental, for nearly 9 million children across the U.S. Congress let its federal funding expire on September 30, 2017. Since this lapse in funding, several state programs have been exploring contingency plans to freeze enrollment and/or shut down, jeopardizing CHIP coverage for children and families. It is more critical than ever to contact your members of Congress to express your support for CHIP and urge them to extend federal CHIP funds for five years.

Please contact your members of Congress: Plan to write to your U.S. Representative and your two U.S. Senators. Find websites and contact information for your representative here and for your two senators here. Use the below template to write an email or letter:

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Your full name  
Your address  
Your city, state, and zip code*  
(Optional: your phone number)

Dear Representative OR Senator __[insert last name]__,

My name is __[your first and last name]__ and I live in __[city/state]__. [Optional: If you are a healthcare professional, you could also mention that in your introduction, “I am a dentist/dental hygienist/nurse practitioner/etc. in the community.”] I am writing to voice my concerns about the lapse in funding for the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

On September 30, federal funding for CHIP expired. This funding lapse places thousands of children in our state — and nearly 9 million children nationwide — at risk of losing medical and dental coverage that allows them to learn and thrive.

I am particularly concerned about the oral health needs of my community. Without CHIP, these children may have no affordable option for vital dental coverage. I urge you to act to extend CHIP funding for five years, as soon as possible, to ensure that no family is left without the coverage they need to be healthy.

[You could comment on how many children in your state benefit from CHIP]

OR

If you’d like to share a personal comment or brief story — either about CHIPS impact on you, your community, or your patients— this is a good time to tell it.)

Today, more children in the U.S. have oral health coverage than ever before, thanks to CHIP and programs like it. We must continue to build on these achievements — not tear them apart — for children and families. I’m counting on you to do the right thing: stand up for affordable oral health coverage in my community and across the country by immediately renewing CHIP.

Thank you,

[Your name here]